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The well-written introduction which Mr. Alvord has prefixed to his book comprises a careful survey of the history, and especially of the institutional development, of the Illinois country in the period covered by the accompanying documents. Drawn, as we are assured it has been, from unpublished and largely unused sources (the Kaskaskia Records, the Draper Manuscripts, etc.), it represents a real contribution to a subject which has too commonly been glossed over by writers for the obvious reason of lack of information. A useful bibliography is appended, though the principle on which it has been made up does not appear.

FREDERIC AUSTIN OGG.

*Guide to the Materials for the History of the United States in Spanish Archives (Simancas, the Archivo Historico Nacional, and Seville).* By Professor William R. Shepherd. (Washington, The Carnegie Institution, 1907, pp. 107.) This book, just published as we go to press, presents first an introduction on general archive-conditions in Spain, then describes in order the three principal repositories of material relating to the history of the United States. It states briefly the processes by which each collection was brought together and gives titles of the various printed and manuscript inventories. In each subdivision of each of the three sections, devoted respectively to the archives of Simancas, to the National Historical Archives at Madrid and to the archives of the Indies at Seville, a descriptive statement is given, followed by lists of the principal items relating to United States history which the compiler found. A brief general bibliography and a somewhat full index follow.

#### TEXT-BOOKS

*History of Mediaeval and Modern Civilization to the End of the Seventeenth Century.* By CHARLES SEIGNOBOS, Doctor of Letters of the University of Paris. Translation edited by JAMES ALTON JAMES, Ph.D., Professor of History, Northwestern University. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1907. Pp. xi, 438.)

WHAT are the features of this work? As the title implies it does not dwell upon events. It contains rather "selected topics of a nature to make the customs of each society clear, and explanations intended to make it understood how these customs were formed, modified and scattered". Many events are indeed briefly recalled, but only because of their special connection with the movement of civilization. The larger lines of political development are indicated, and a résumé is given of the essentials of medieval and early modern history with reference to institutions, customs, ideas, art and letters. Government of the Barbarian Kings, The Church in the Middle Ages, Royal Authority in France, Struggle between the Houses of France and Austria, The Renaissance, International Relations—thus run some of the chapter-

headings. Furthermore, the work was written—now some twenty years ago—to meet the requirements of the history programmes in certain branches of secondary education in France, “enseignement spécial” and “enseignement des filles”. So that what we have here is really a history of civilization under the yoke, though not the guise, of a text-book. Be it added that it is a text-book marked alike by high scholarship and by simple, clean-cut exposition.

What use may we reasonably expect to make of this work in our schools, now that it is accessible in English? It is not likely that we shall employ it as a text-book. Most of us think that an historical manual should set forth not the history of civilization as such, abstracted from general history, but the general story of men with emphasis upon their civilization. The French hold the same view, for the most part, and Professor Seignobos has lately written a series of manuals which exemplify it admirably. Probably the only sphere in which use of the work will be contemplated among us is that of collateral reading. Here, though, one encounters the practical purpose it was designed to serve. Being written to be a text-book, it must needs be brief and at the same time cover the whole field. Of necessity its treatments of most topics are very short, and of none very long. Of necessity, further, it adds relatively little to what is to be found in our better manuals, which make topics concerning civilization part and parcel of their account and dwell rather extensively upon the more important of them, like the Church in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Yet its matter is presented sometimes more truly than in our manuals and often much more effectively; and the translators have rendered, though not always with unswerving accuracy, on the whole with commendable success, both the sense and the style of the original.

EARLE W. DOW.

*A Brief History of the United States.* By JOHN BACH McMASTER, Professor of American History in the University of Pennsylvania. (New York: American Book Company. 1907. Pp. 434, xxx.)

In this history of the United States for elementary schools, Professor McMaster has presented, as he says, “the essential features of our country’s progress” and also “many things of secondary consequence which it is well for every young American to know”.

The book shows a balance in the discussion of events that is noteworthy. Accounts of wars are reduced to a minimum. Western settlement and its influence are given an amount of space not heretofore seen in texts of this grade, and the leading features of industrial development are noted.

Of the forty-four chapters, the six most worthy of commendation are entitled: Our Country in 1789, Growth of the Country, 1789-1805,